

**IAS 4013**  
**International Politics, Literature and Film**  
**Fall 2009**

**Class meets:**  
**7:00-9:40 Monday**

Instructor: Professor Robert Cox  
 Office: Hester 201  
 Hours: Tuesday, Thursday 10:00-12:00  
 E-mail: rhcox@ou.edu

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

International Politics, Literature and Film

This capstone is an exercise in the practical application of knowledge about global affairs. Politics is pervasive in the fabric of society. We live it every day, even when we are not actively thinking about it. Others think about it too, and some of them feel compelled to comment on politics. The forms of political commentary are many and an IAS major should have a special ability to recognize political commentary and make sense of it.

Therefore, we will examine two forms of political commentary that often get overlooked in our standard discussions of “high politics,” namely literature and film. Often, those who write literature and produce film do so in order to make statements about politics. Couching their observations in an entertaining medium helps to bring the issues to the attention of a wider audience. We will set out to discern and evaluate the political messages in a number of films and novels. The expectation is that graduating IAS students have some familiarity with global affairs and that they can bring their acquired knowledge to bear on the novels and films we explore in class. The subject matter will span the globe, and students should already be familiar with the basic operations of a parliamentary democracy, the dilemmas of creating a sovereign state, and the way states relate to one another on the global stage.

### *NOTICE ON DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION*

*Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities.*

### COURSE READINGS

The following books are available for purchase:

Kamala Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve*, NAL/Dutton, 1976

ISBN#: 0451168364

George Orwell, *Down and Out in Paris and London*, Harcourt Brace & Company, 1972

- ISBN#: 015626224X  
 Milan Kundera, *The Joke*, HarperCollins Publishers, 1993  
 ISBN#: 006099505X  
 Julia Alvarez, *In the Time of the Butterflies*, NAL/Dutton, 1995  
 ISBN#: 0452274427  
 Bao Ninh, *The Sorrow of War : A Novel of North Vietnam*, Riverhead Books, 1996  
 ISBN: 1573225436  
 Jerzy Kosinski, *The Painted Bird*, Grove Press; 1965  
 ISBN: 080213422X  
 Tahar Ben Jelloun, *Corruption*, The New Press, 1995.  
 ISBN: 1565842960

### COURSE EXPECTATIONS

The evaluation of students will be based on the quality of written work and class participation. For the evaluation of written work, students will write three essays and a final exam. Each essay will focus on one of the course themes. It should explain the political messages contained in the book and film, and relate them to the assigned article for the selected theme. Each essay must be 5-8 pages, typed and double-spaced. Each essay is due on or before the beginning of class on the assigned days. No late essays will be accepted. Early essays are welcome. The final exam will be a take-home exam. Questions will be distributed the final day of class, and it will be due one week later (13 December).

The calculation of the final grade is as follows:

<u>Assignments:</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Grading Scale:</u>
Class Attendance, 2 points per class	30 points	A = 139-155 points
Three essays, 5-8 pages, 25 points each	75 points	B = 124-138
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>50 points</u>	C = 108-123
TOTAL	155 points	D = 93-107
		F = 0-92 points

### OUTLINE OF MAJOR DUE DATES

First Essay	30 SEP
Second Essay	28 OCT
Third Essay	25 NOV
Final Exam	16 DEC

### DATE            TOPIC AND READINGS

26 AUG	<b>Introduction</b> <b>Reason, Modernity and Political Development</b> Film: <i>Monty Python and the Holy Grail</i> , medieval British comedy
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- 09 SEP Novel: Jerzy Kosinski, *The Painted Bird*  
 Essay: Isaiah Berlin, "European Unity and Its Vicissitudes," in *The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991, pp. 175-206.

### Revolution

- 16 SEP Film: *Danton*, French film about the French Revolution  
 23 SEP Novel: Julia Alvarez, *In the Time of the Butterflies*  
 Essay: Barrington Moore, "Inevitability and the Sense of Injustice," *Injustice: The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt*, White Plains: M E Sharpe, 1978, pp. 458-505.

### Totalitarianism

- 30 SEP Film: *The Manchurian Candidate*, Hollywood film about Korean War.  
 07 OCT Novel: Milan Kundera, *The Joke*  
 Essay: Hannah Arendt, "Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government," *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1958, pp. 460-479.

### The Glory of War

- 14 OCT Film: *Stalingrad*, German film about World War II  
 21 OCT Novel: Bao Ninh, *The Sorrow of War: A Novel About North Vietnam*  
 Essay: Kenneth N. Waltz, "The First Image: International Conflict and Human Behavior," Chapter 2 of *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1959, pp. 16-41.

### Women, Children and Poverty in the Developing World

- 28 OCT Film: *Salaam Bombay*. Indian film about a tragic Oliver Twist  
 04 NOV Book: Kamala Markandaya, *Nectar in a Sieve*  
 Essay: Ester Boserup, *Woman=s Role in Economic Development*, London: Earthscan Publications, 1970, Chapters 9 and 10.

### Labor Relations in Industrial Society

- 11 NOV Film: *Roger and Me*, American film noir about plant closures  
 18 NOV Book: George Orwell, *Down and Out in Paris and London*  
 Essay: Friedrich A. Hayek, ">Social= or Distributive Justice," Chapter 9 of *Law, Legislation and Liberty, Volume 2: The Mirage of Social Justice*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976, pp. 62-100.

### Political Corruption

- 25 NOV Film: *La Ley de Herodes*, Mexican film about the PRI  
 02 DEC Novel: Tahar Ben Jelloun, *Corruption*  
 Essay: Jeanne Becquart-Leclercq, "Paradoxes of Political Corruption: A

French View.” in Arnold Heidenheimer, Michael Johnston and Victor Levine, eds., *Political Corruption: A Handbook*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1999, pp. 191-210.

09 DEC

**Genocide**

Film: *The Wannsee Conference*

Essay: Daniel J. Goldhagen, “Introduction: Reconciving Central Aspects of the Holocaust,” *Hitler’s Willing Executioners* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1996), pp.3-24.

16 DEC

**FINAL EXAM DUE**